



Archaeological map of Mrauk-U, March 2019

Mrauk-U (Myohaung), Rakhine (Arakan), Myanmar (Burma)

E 93.19368 N 20.59087

Between 1430 and 1784 the "Arrakan" kingdom, based in Mrauk-U, was a powerful player in the geopolitics of the west coast of Myanmar and the Bay of Bengal, from Chittagong to Tennaserim. European visitors called Mrauk-U "Another Venice" due to its waterways and its wealth.

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2019
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SOME FIGURES

- * 246 temples, of which 214 are made of stone- many are ruined.
- * 267 stupas, of which 198 are stone (others are brick)
- * 13 "pitakat-taik", or basket-buildings, named for the "pitaka", the "three baskets" of the Buddhist scriptures. Also called "libraries".
- * More than 140 stone Buddha images (or groups of images) recovered by local devotees and left in the open or covered with shelters.
- * Hundreds more mounds or archaeological features are yet to be analysed.
- * 5 sq km enclosed by stone walls and sidecut hills. The sidecuttings form steep escarpments with a trench at the base and often stone or brick fortifications at the top. The city is surrounded by fortifications, built in the 16th century, when there was a threat of invasion by neighbouring kingdoms. However Mrauk-U (or Arrakan) was so successful that it mostly fought its battles a long way from home, and the city fortifications were probably never used in warfare.
- * 40 sq kms of Buddhist monuments (plus possibly one or two Catholic churches and up to 3 mosques).
- * 20 sq kms of earth banks for water control.
- * More than 4000 mm of rain each year.